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For action

Recommendation for funding for a short-duration country programme**

Paraguay

Summary

The present document contains a recommendation for funding from general resources and supplementary funds for the country programme of Paraguay with duration of two years to support activities that will lead to the preparation of a full-length country programme. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the amount of $1,417,000 from general resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $1,000,000 in supplementary funds, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2000 to 2001.

* E/ICEF/1999/15

** The figures provided in the present document are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1998. They will be contained in the "Summary of 1999 recommendations for general resources and supplementary funding programmes" (E/ICEF/1999/P/L.16).

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Basic data

(1997 unless otherwise stated)

Child population (millions, under 18 years)	2.4
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	33
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	27
Underweight (of moderate and severe) (1990)	4
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1989–1995)	190
Literacy (% male/female) (1995)	93/90
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1996)	91/91
Primary schoolchildren reaching grade 5 (%) (1994)	71
Access to safe water (%) (1996)	60
Routine EPI vaccines financed by Government (%)	90
GNP per capita (US$)	2 010
One-year-olds fully immunized against:	
tuberculosis	87 per cent
diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus	82 per cent
measles	61 per cent
poliomyelitis	82 per cent
Pregnant women immunized against tetanus	32 per cent

The situation of children and women

1. In Paraguay, managing the transition to a democratic system has taken priority over resolving substantive economic and social issues. Widespread poverty and inequality persist. In 1998, the gross national product per capita was an estimated $1,580, with the richest 20 per cent of the population controlling 63 per cent of the country's produce, and the poorest 10 per cent controlling only 0.6 per cent. Sixty-eight per cent of the population live in households that have at least one of its basic needs unsatisfied. Social disparities affect both rural peasant and poorer urban populations, as well as women and ethnic minorities.

2. Social indicators underscore such disparities: for example, while national data indicated an average maternal mortality rate (MMR) of 224 per 100,000 live births, in the rural department of Caazapa, the rate was estimated at 370. Similarly, while in Asuncion, the capital, 74 per cent of schoolchildren finish sixth grade, in Canindeyu, only 37 per cent do so. Inequities also exist in the proportion of income paid to working women, who receive only 64 per cent of the salary paid to men.

3. The situation of children is inextricably linked to these socio-economic and political contexts. Insufficient coverage and quality of basic public services have been dominant factors affecting the situation of children. Based on 1997 data, some 66 per cent of the population have access to public health services, 39 per cent to safe water and a mere 9 per cent to proper sanitary facilities. On the other hand, 47 per cent of childbirths occur in the home, and only 57 per cent of women have five or more prenatal visits. These figures are all the more worrisome if one considers that the public deficit has tripled in the last three years and that the chances of increasing social investments are very slim.

4. The major causes of infant mortality are injuries during delivery, infections of the newborn, pneumonia, congenital malformations and neonatal tetanus. The rate of child chronic malnutrition is 16 per cent, and 9 per cent of children have low weight at birth. Septic abortion, toxaemia, haemorrhages and sepsis are the major causes of maternal mortality. The infant and maternal mortality rates increase in hard-to-reach rural areas. It is estimated that 35 per cent of pregnant women suffer from anaemia.

5. The average Paraguayan has less than a fifth grade education. As a result, 47 per cent of the economically active population are "functional illiterates". The official literacy rate is 91 per cent; however, in rural areas, it is 86 per cent. The net primary school enrolment rate was 91 per cent for 1996. However, retention rates, while increasing steadily between 1987 and 1996 (from 44 to 61 per cent), reveal that

4 out of every 10 children still do not reach sixth grade. Net secondary school enrolment is only 21 per cent (1995). Some 42 per cent of teachers in rural areas do not have a teaching degree. Low enrolment and high drop-out rates exacerbate child labour. It has been found that 34 per cent of children between 7 and 17 years of age are economically active.

6. Apart from the nascent experiences in the *Mita Rogi* project (a child day-care centre), early childhood care and development (ECCD) services are lacking and are practically non-existent for children between the ages of eight months and four years old. Some 25 per cent of urban households and 27 per cent of poor urban households are headed by women. Frequently these mothers are forced to leave their children — often in unsafe and non-stimulating environments in order to work outside their neighbourhoods.

7. For the girl child, the menace of sexual exploitation is increasing. A UNICEF-supported survey on sexual exploitation in Asuncion and Ciudad del Este reveals that 40 per cent of prostitutes are younger than 16 years old, and 26 per cent are between 16 and 19 years old.

Programme cooperation, 1995–1999

8. Paraguay ratified the Convention on Rights of Children in 1990, and in 1996, a new adoption law was passed enacting its principles. However, a draft Children's Code still awaits approval by the legislature. The factors described above mitigate against achievement of several of the goals set by the National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children by the year 2000. These include: (a) the reduction by one third of the under-five mortality rate (U5MR); (b) the reduction by one half of MMR; (c) the elimination of neonatal tetanus and iodine deficiency disorders; (d) increasing the school retention rate to 80 per cent; and (e) increasing access to sanitary facilities.

9. The mid-term review (MTR) acknowledged significant results. The country programme introduced innovative methodologies to increase the quality of education in rural areas through its *Mita Iru* ("child-friendly" in Guarani) project. It has also developed a new approach to ECCD through the *Mita Roga*, a day child-care centre managed by mothers in poor suburban communities.

10. Progress has also been made in programmes related to nutrition at the community level through an alliance with the National Social Pastoral of the Catholic Church. The poor rural and urban communities covered by the projects have learned how to enrich their food, putting more emphasis on the role of micronutrients such as iron, vitamins and calcium, as well as soybeans as a source of protein and the maintenance of a balanced healthy diet.

11. Immunization coverage has reached 82 per cent. Some 85 per cent per cent of hospitals have been certified as baby-friendly, and there is a 72 per cent use of oral rehydration therapy.

12. UNICEF capacity to influence public opinion can be seen by its presence and credibility in the press, which has disseminated information on the situation of children and women and important issues that affect them. Campaigns such as the Mayors and Governors as Defenders of Children, the establishment of a network of journalists concerned with children's rights and the organization of a group of UNICEF volunteers have positioned UNICEF to serve as a strong advocate of participatory public policies.

Lessons learned

13. There is a need to improve national capacity for adequate monitoring and evaluation as most projects lack baseline data or indicators to monitor progress and results. Therefore, an integrated system has been introduced at both national and local levels. At the national level, sources of information are working to achieve a consensus among governmental agencies, international organizations and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

14. The MTR reaffirmed the need to overcome sectoral patterns and adopt a holistic child-focused approach with mutually complementary interventions. To achieve this, a dialogue has been necessary between the different sectors on social policies aimed at children, as well as at the local level to integrate intersectoral municipal projects.

Recommended programme cooperation, 2000–2001

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	2000	*2001*	*Total*
General resources			
Community-based survival and development	413.0	381.6	794.6
Rights to education and participation	195.0	196.6	391.6
Protection of children's rights	119.0	111.8	230.8
Subtotal	**727.0**	**690.0**	**1 417.0**
Supplementary funds			
Community-based survival and development	200.0	200.0	400.0
Rights to education and participation	100.0	100.0	200.0
Protection of children's rights	200.0	200.0	400.0
Subtotal	**500.0**	**500.0**	**1 000.0**
Total	**1 227.0**	**1 190.0**	**2 417.0**

Programme objectives and strategies

15. The new Government of Paraguay has expressed its commitment to the need to guarantee universal access to education and the importance of providing quality health services for all. The extension of the UNICEF programme of cooperation for two year (2000–2001) will support those objectives and advocate to the new political authorities the formulation of a social development plan that will emphasize children's and women's rights. It will also lead to the full harmonization of the programme cycles of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF as of 2002, and enable UNICEF to participate fully in the preparation of a Common Country Assessment (CCA) and a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which will provide the framework for the development of the next full-length programme of cooperation.

16. This short-duration programme is in accordance with the global objectives of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2002 (E/ICEF/1998/13 and Corr.1) and aims to accelerate achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. It focuses on keeping all human rights, especially those of children and women, high on the country's agenda.

17. Programme cooperation will continue to strengthen the capacity of the Government to: (a) translate into national commitments the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the agreed goals of the World Summit for Children, including those on reducing the infant mortality rate, U5MR, MMR and the levels of malnutrition; (b) strengthen and expand ECCD and improve parents knowledge and skills; and (c) strengthen the analysis and monitoring of its NPA for children.

18. Consequently, this short-duration programme of cooperation includes three programmes: (a) community-based survival and development; (b) rights to education and participation; and (c) the protection of children's rights.

Community-based survival and development

19. In selected local communities, this programme will advocate the need for a child-centred approach to early childhood care, growth, survival and development and endeavour to decrease the high rates of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. Projects will include early childhood education (ECE) to ensure the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of children; the promotion of hygiene practices; improved nutrition and health care; and better parenting by both mothers and

fathers. It will also aim to improve access to safe drinking water and excreta disposal, reduce malnutrition, and increase the coverage and quality of ECE services for children under five years old.

20. Interventions will include the development of skills to identify needs, articulate demands and plan the expansion or innovation of basic social services at the municipal level. They will also emphasize cultural aspects that define family child-rearing roles with the aim of changing behavioural patterns to improve the relationship between genders.

21. The programme will support the process of decentralization currently under way at the health district councils, strengthen the network of Mayors as Defenders of Children, formulate Municipal Action Plans for Children and strengthen the network of Children's Rights Defence Councils.

Rights to education and participation

22. This programme will aim at the universalization of primary education, from pre-primary to ninth grade (5 to 15 years of age), in terms of coverage and quality. It will advocate for an education that transmits democratic and pluralist values, including tolerance and respect for diversity.

23. The programme will focus on the right to education as a means to underscore social inclusion and inform public opinion on the effects of social and economic situations that increase school drop-out rates, child labour and teen pregnancies. The programme will include supplementary feeding and advocacy to encourage parents from low social/economic areas to maintain their children's attendance in school. A strong component of communication and social mobilization of adolescents to encourage their participation in issues of national or local concern will be a major feature.

24. In addition, the programme will include efforts to mobilize communities to transform their schools into places where mothers, fathers and children can meet with community leaders to strengthen channels of communication between the generations.

Protection of children's rights

25. This programme will advocate for and support legislative, institutional and policy adaptations required to protect children's rights, particularly those children who have been victimized or are at risk of abuse, in conflict with the law, abandoned, or suffer sexual and economic exploitation. It will also contribute to the mass dissemination of the principles of the two Conventions and emphasize a gender perspective. Surveys to provide better information on child prostitution, abuse, exploitation and abandonment will be carried out to closely monitor their situation. This will be a first step towards more effective mobilization of support to reduce such social problems.

26. Support to the Government and other national partners will focus on the organization of a National Child Rights Protection Network, thus implementing the Children's Code presently debated in the legislature. UNICEF will also contribute towards the design of public policies based on a "first call for children", underscoring the importance of budgetary allocations to the social sectors. Similarly, the programme will train social workers, magistrates and other law enforcement agents, as well as policy makers dealing with children whose rights require special protection, on how to integrate children's rights into their primary functions. Technical assistance will be provided to define and implement advanced methodologies related to the care of children with special protection needs.

27. The programme will coordinate activities with the general education programme, since the opportunity for a second chance in education is a key aspect of social reintegration efforts of children in need of special protection measures.

Programme management

28. The UNICEF/Government of Paraguay Coordinating Committee, formed by social sector ministers, NGOs, the Church and provincial governments, will review and approve the annual plans of action and hold meetings three times a year to monitor, advise and coordinate with bilateral cooperation agencies. Programme quality assurance indicators, as developed by The Americas and the Caribbean Regional Office, headquarters and the Coordinating Committee, will be built into the work plan. Field visits by members of the Coordinating Committee will be undertaken whenever necessary.

29. Within the framework of management excellence, the country office will develop annual management plans, incorporating the recommendations of the prior annual review, giving special consideration to staff morale, on-the-job training and ensuring that personnel turnover does not interfere with implementation.

30. An integrated monitoring and evaluation plan will serve as the basis for the annual reviews, annual reporting, advisory missions and special evaluations, and will systematically involve partners, allies, counterparts, donors and, in some instances, the beneficiaries themselves.

31. To work towards implementation of United Nations reform, UNICEF will participate in the preparation of a CCA, leading in due course to the development of an UNDAF. Collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA will be strengthened: complementary goals will be established and convergent projects and activities developed as appropriate. Efforts will be made to work more closely with other United Nations agencies in relevant fields, with the CCA and UNDAF providing the framework.

32. The programme plans to increase fund-raising activities to obtain the required supplementary funds from bilateral cooperation agencies present in the country, as well as from the national private sector, multilateral banks (the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank) and the National Government. The office will pay special attention to leveraging further government resources for both local and national programmes. Improved contributions management, including timely and substantive donor reports, will be a priority.

TABLE

COUNTRY : PARAGUAY
PROGRAMME : 2000-2001

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET				POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/		
	GR	FSF	NSF	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
GENERAL RESOURCES :																	
COMMUNITY-BASED SURVIVAL AND DEVEL	794,600			794,600	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	0.7	2	0	189,804	189,804
RIGHTS TO EDUCATION AND PARTICIPAT	391,640			391,640	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.3	0.8	0	64,463	64,463
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS	230,760			230,760	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3	1	1.3	0	65,563	65,563
TOTAL GR	1,417,000			1,417,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.1	2	4.1	0	319,830	319,830
SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING :																	
COMMUNITY-BASED SURVIVAL AND DEVEL		0	400,000	400,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RIGHTS TO EDUCATION AND PARTICIPAT		0	200,000	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS		0	400,000	400,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SF		0	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL GR & SF	1,417,000	0	1,000,000	2,417,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.1	2	4.1	0	319,830	319,830
SUPPORT BUDGET		Operating costs		86,300													
		Staffing			0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	6	256,665	428,906	685,571
GRAND TOTAL (GR + SF + SB)					0	0	0	1	0	0	1	4.1	5	10.1	256,665	748,736	1,005,401
	Number of posts and staff costs:																
	Current programme cycle										1	4	5	10			
	At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)										1	4.1	5	10.1	256,665	748,736	1,005,401

GR = general resources.
SF = supplementary funding.
FSF = funded supplementary funding.
NSF = new supplementary funding.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
SB = support budget.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Excludes temporary assistance and overtime.